

Cockerham to Glasson Dock

We start at Cockerham, a small and attractive village just a few minutes' drive from Junction 33 of the M6. It has a large car park next to the Village Hall on the B5272, which makes a great base for a walk. If you are using Satnav to find the car park, use the address of the Village Hall: 14 Main St, Cockerham, Lancaster LA2 0EF. If your device uses What-3-Words, then the tag is **luggage.scariest.airfields** which corresponds to the OS Grid reference SD46555203. Our intention is to walk to Glasson dock, via the Glasson Branch of the Lancaster Canal, and there are a number of footpaths we could take from Cockerham to the canal, but in this instance, we opted to take a bus to Thurnham Hall, allowing us to include more of the Lancashire Coastal Way path later in the day. To find the bus stop, walk left out of the car park down Main Street as far as the junction, then go right, but stay on the left hand side of the road. The bus stop is opposite some recently built houses at the corner of Rectory Gardens. The service provider on this route is Kirkby Lonsdale Coach Hire on behalf of Lancashire County Council, and the service numbers are 88 and 89 - timetable information can be found at the LCC website: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/public-transport/bus-timetables/>

Once we get off the bus, we are opposite the access road for Thurnham Hall – so we cross and stroll up to the Hall just 100 away. The public footpath runs past the front of the House and then to a rear car park where a waymarked gate gives us access to a field by the side of the canal. We head north for 200m toward the bridge over the canal Bailey Bridge. We now need to take the towpath and head northwest down to Glasson Dock. To do this, we first need to head right to get down from the bridge to the towpath. Once at the towpath we go left – the canal should be on your left from here onward.

We soon arrive at Bridge 8 (also known as Brows Bridge) where we walk under the bridge and then climb the ramp up to the road above to take a left turn and walk toward the Lune Estuary just 100m away. We take the path along the edge of the estuary down to Glasson, passing Glasson church on the way. We continue down to the docks and look for the road crossing over the lock between the large marina – considered part of the canal, and the dock, which is tidal and therefore considered part of the marine environment. At the time of our visit, the bridge was out of use, so we crossed at the pedestrian footbridge at the lock.

We now head up Tithebarn street, soon reaching the highest point on the walk at the peak of Tithe Barn Hill – a dizzying 20m above sea level. We follow the road round to the left and walk about 150m to a junction where we see a way marker for the Lancashire Coastal Way – this points us right along Marsh Lane (the clue is in the name here) and we are soon crossing fields as we head west toward Crook Farm. At Crook Farn we climb up to the coastal path, noting a rusty steel buoy as we enjoy the views over the estuary toward the power station at Heysham. We head South along the Lancashire Coastal way for a good while now. Our next landmark is Lighthouse Cottage – where Janet Raby and Beatrice Parkinson were the last female lighthouse keepers in the UK.

We follow the path along the coast passing Plover Hill, which as the name suggests is a good location for birdwatching (with more than plovers to be seen), and then bear slightly to the left, at which point the remains of Cockersand Abbey come into view. There is little to see now other than the intact Grade I listed Chapter House, but clearly this was once a much larger structure.

We continue with the coastal path as it heads down to the edge of Cockerham Marshes – just past a second world war lookout post - and then follow the clear and obvious route around the marsh edge for the next mile or so, passing a number of caravan parks as we go. We walk along a long straight road below an embankment and at the end of this meet a junction – noting a memorial to a local man killed in a tragic road traffic collision in 2007.

At this junction, we follow the arrows to Pattys barn and just 400m later we arrive at the barn and need to look for a way marker at the embankment above which leads us through a small woodland and into an airfield where we are greeted with ample signage to indicate that danger is present here.

The airfield is used by the Black Knights Skydiving Centre, and if the weather is calm – as it was for us - there is a good chance that you will see aircraft taking off or landing or parachutists landing in the field ahead. The public footpath is across the end of the runway – so the club provides marshals to help with safe crossing. It should go without saying that any advice they give should be taken seriously.

From here the path continues across fields for about 500m until we arrive at a road – this is the A588 so take care. We turn left and cross the carriageway to walk on the opposite pavement for just 200m until we see a way marker for a footpath across a field toward the attractive St Michaels and All Angels.

From here the car park adjacent to the village hall is visible and the walk ends here.

- **Total distance 13.2 km (8.2 miles)**
- **Total ascent 62 m**
- **Moderate walk**